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EXHIBIT 1

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August 19, 2019

The Honorable Indira Talwani
United States District Judge
1 Courthouse Way
Boston, MA 02210

Re: **Stephen Semprevivo**
Case No. 19MJ 01019

Dear Judge Talwani,

The following report is a social profile and assessment of Stephen Semprevivo, which is being submitted for consideration in his sentencing. Mr. Semprevivo is a 53-year-old businessman who has pleaded guilty to mail and honest services fraud as a result of trying to secure his son's position at Georgetown University by paying \$400,000 to The Key Worldwide Foundation. To his credit, Mr. Semprevivo admitted his guilt early in the legal proceedings, has no prior criminal record or any history of bad faith or immoral conduct. To the contrary, Mr. Semprevivo's involvement in the fraud appears to be aberrant to his otherwise law-abiding and exemplary life.

This report will focus on Mr. Semprevivo's background, character and values, and his history of dedication to his work and family throughout his adult life. This includes his stellar work history and his commitment to his coworkers, employees and clients over many years. Many of these individuals have submitted letters describing Mr. Semprevivo as an attentive and thoughtful supervisor and coworker who took the time to mentor many of the younger team members.

He also has a long and impressive record of service to the community, which continues to the present. In this regard, I have spoken with Bob Pratt, President of Volunteers of America Los Angeles (VOALA), where Mr. Semprevivo has been volunteering to help homeless veterans with housing and jobs. A community service plan is proposed here utilizing Mr. Semprevivo's mentoring skills, leadership and experience to work with VOALA's disadvantaged youth and educational programs as a way to pay his debt to society.

Information in this report was obtained from interviews with Stephen Semprevivo; his wife, Rita Semprevivo; his two sons, Adam and Jordan Semprevivo; his older sister, Stephanie Ferguson; and his younger brother Philip Semprevivo Jr..

I have also spoken with Mark and Renee Paul, longtime friends of the Semprevivos. The Paul family referred the Semprevivos to who they thought was a respected college counselor for college preparation for Adam when he was 15. That counselor has now been charged as the mastermind in this college admissions case.

I have consulted with Richard Romanoff, PhD, who conducted a psychological assessment of Mr. Semprevivo. His findings have been incorporated into this report.

Over 30 character reference letters have been submitted on behalf of Mr. Semprevivo and are appended to this report. I have also reviewed legal case file documents.

Introduction

Stephen Semprevivo is a businessman who specializes in growing middle-market and start-up companies. Until recently, he was the Chief Strategy Officer of Cydcor, a company that outsources sales teams. Stephen resides with his family in Los Angeles, California in a house that he and his wife, Rita Carmen Semprevivo nee Vella, purchased in 2001. Stephen and Rita have been married for 23 years. Rita, age 57, works as a real estate agent for Keller Williams. The couple have two sons: Adam, 21, recently completed his junior year at Georgetown University; and Jordan, 20, is going into his third year at the University of Pennsylvania.

Stephen's father, Philip Semprevivo Sr., age 77, was the VP of Operations at Borders Books until he retired. He lives with his second wife, Toby Semprevivo, also in her 70s, in Pinckney, Michigan. Stephen's mother, Margaret "Peggy" Semprevivo, nee Cook, was 52 when she died in 1997 from ovarian cancer. Peggy once owned a fashion design company after working for IBM and as a substitute teacher.

Stephen has an older sister and a younger brother. Stephanie Ferguson, age 54, lives in Bellevue, Washington, where she has been employed by Microsoft for 23 years. She is the corporate vice president of marketing for the company's cloud business. Stephanie is married to Eric Ferguson, 55, a school administrator for Seattle public schools. They have two children, Peggy, 20, a college student, and Robert, 18, who recently graduated from high school. Stephen's younger brother, Philip Semprevivo Jr., 52, lives in Port Chester, New York, and is an attorney. Philip and his wife have six children, ranging in age from 14 to 22.

Stephen Semprevivo—a middle-aged father with a remarkable work history, as well as a stellar reputation with colleagues, employees and partners—was a dedicated and law-abiding family man when he met Rick Singer. Among other things, this report will lay out how a capable and successful man like Stephen became engaged in the crime for which he has pled guilty. A fundamental question is: How did a masterful manipulator like Rick Singer get what he wanted out of Stephen Semprevivo?

Childhood

Born December 12, 1965 in Gloversville, New York, Stephen is the second of three children born to Phillip "Phil" and Margaret "Peggy" Semprevivo. They met as undergraduates at the University of New Hampshire when Peggy was earning a liberal arts degree and Phil was getting a bachelor's degree in psychology, prior to shifting toward the early stages of a career in the information technology revolution. When Stephen was growing up, Phil worked in computer centers at state universities in New York.

When the children were young, though, Peggy worked as a substitute teacher. She later returned to college to earn an MBA and then went to work for IBM. At one point, she built up and ran a successful fashion design business. During Stephen's early childhood, the family was middle class. Later, after Stephen was already an adult, his parents became more successful after Phil became a partner in an upscale department store.

But early on, Phil was in demand in the computer technology field in the public colleges in upstate New York. The family moved from town to town as Phil obtained better jobs. Stephen lived in five different towns—including Gloversville, Cobleskill, New Paltz and Niskayuna—by the time he finished the 8th grade. Stephen describes these small towns as nice, simple places to grow up. While

Stephen says he got used to moving around, he had a hard time staying in touch with friends he made along the way.

The family finally settled in Ridgewood, New Jersey, in Bergen County. Stephen describes the town as a small, upscale suburban community with a population of about 10,000. It was here that Stephen would complete his high school education at Ridgewood High. According to Stephen, Ridgewood was a big step up from where they had lived before, both in terms of the town's socioeconomic population and in the family's personal income. Phil had begun working at the corporate tax company Deloitte, on the management consulting side.

Stephen describes his mother, Peggy as more creative than his father. She was an artist in lithography, drawing and painting, but Peggy had a practical side. In addition to returning to business school when Stephen was a teenager, and looking for good schools for her children, she made sure that all the kids did chores, like cleaning the house, mowing lawns and shoveling driveways. Stephen and his brother Phil learned lessons about practicality from her as they earned money in the winter shoveling snow from other people's driveways.

Although all three children were good students and academically motivated, Stephanie relates that Stephen was naturally curious about many things and threw himself into his studies. Remarking on her brother, Stephanie recalls, "He got into all those geeky things, like chemistry and science. You could just tell he was smart. But, Stephen was also so easy to be with."

Because of his academic facility, Stephen was two years ahead of his classmates in math by the time he was in 6th grade. Stephen didn't find math hard, but at first, he felt awkward being the young kid in class. In the end, he grew into it and fondly recalls being praised by both parents for doing so well.

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We came to see the family as very fragile. Most of all, we knew not to do anything to upset the family. Stephen took that on the most, but he has blocked [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

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Harvard

In high school, Stephen played baseball and competed as a 400-meter runner and in the triple jump. His track team, he says, won many meets. His grades at Ridgewood High School were perfect.

When he was a sophomore in high school, his mother researched summer programs for high school students at Harvard, Columbia and Johns Hopkins. Stephen was particularly interested in science and chose the high school program at Harvard. He recalls...

It was exciting. I was naturally curious, but I didn't know what to expect. After starting classes, though, I felt confident. I liked the independence, the college environment and the resources, like laboratories.

It was the first year that Harvard had offered the program, and Stephen and several hundred high school students from around the country lived in a dormitory. Stephen made friends and ended up taking university classes in genetics and marine biology with regular university students who were years older than him. Stephen got A's in both courses. "I loved the classes," he says, "and got to know the professors. Based on that experience, I knew it was where I wanted to go to college."

In 1984, Stephen graduated with a 4.0 grade point average. He applied to 15 prestigious universities, and was accepted by Harvard in a satisfying validation of his improvised coping mechanisms to deal with an insupportable family situation. The destabilizing childhood drove him to study, leading to perfect grades and then to admission to America's most prestigious university.

At Harvard, Stephen shared a dormitory with four other students and developed close friendships with roommates. One college roommate was David Cantrell, who would be the best man at Stephen's wedding and has been a close friend for the last 34 years. In a letter to the Court, Mr. Cantrell writes...

In college, Stephen was known as honest, and hard working ... I, along with our other roommates, always knew we could rely on him. He was generous with his time in helping others with studies and participated in the Big Brother program.

Stephen tried track, but ultimately gave it up because Harvard didn't have a competitive athletic program at the time. His primary focus was his academic life; he studied art and many other courses, but majored in biochemistry and did work in the science lab.

During his four years at Harvard, Stephen worked summer jobs, first in IBM's printer pool delivering documents and tending to the printers. The next summer he worked in a marketing department where he helped prepare presentations. Stephen also worked for his father, who had left Deloitte to become COO of a chain of luxury department stores, B. Altman and Co. in New York City. As was Stephen's tendency, he suppressed the emotional baggage and learned about the retail business in a training program designed for managers at his father's business. Sales, security, accounting and running a restaurant were different facets of overseeing a department store, as he discovered first

hand. Stephen also spent one summer interning for a surgeon doing research at Einstein Medical Center in the Bronx.

[REDACTED]

Meanwhile, Stephen graduated from Harvard in 1988 and, while considering a career in medicine, decided to try his hand in business for a while before coming to a final decision.

Career and Marriage

Looking for work, Stephen sorted through books of East Coast Harvard alumni in search of companies he might want to work for. He was hired by one of them, at an entry level position at a company that provided membership services for clubs. Stephen was quickly promoted, rising from assistant to account manager within a year. When the company bought out Benefit Consultants in San Francisco, Stephen relocated to the Bay Area.

Benefit Consultants was a third-party administrator that handled marketing for insurance companies. Stephen managed the clients, and took charge of direct mail and telemarketing on a national level. For the first year and a half that Stephen was in San Francisco, he volunteered to teach Microsoft Word for a group focused on the troubled city of East Palo Alto where he trained adults for the workforce. It all began when he saw a notice, Stephen says, "and I wanted to help out."

At Benefit Consultants, Stephen met a fun, kind-hearted woman from a working-class family named Rita Vella. "Rita was different from other women I knew," Stephen says, continuing...

Rita was raised with solid values, like honesty and doing good things for others. She was raised as a practicing Catholic with church on Sundays. I really liked that.

The company often sent them out as a team to meet with clients. Because he was new to the area, he began to ask Rita where to go and she would fix him up with friends of hers. Rita recalls...

Because Stephen and I were both in management positions [and worked closely together], I was able to see that Stephen is genuine. He honored his commitments. One time, he was invited to an event hosted by the company president that conflicted with another less prestigious event that I was attending. Stephen decided to go with me to my event. I saw he wasn't just trying to climb the ladder.

Over time, they started doing things together on weekends, and a relationship developed. "He was outgoing and quickly developed a group of friends," she says. "When I realized I wanted Stephen for myself, I stopped fixing him up." She continues...

Although smart, [Stephen] is very humble, unassuming, sweet, honest, and respectful. He would prefer to blend in and be treated the same as others. Stephen's employees loved him, respected, and appreciated the time he

took with their personal growth. Those were the qualities that attracted me to him back then and continue to this day.

Four years after graduating, in 1992, Stephen returned to Harvard to attend its business school. At first, he and Rita commuted back and forth every three weeks. Eventually, Rita was able to transfer from Benefit Consultants to the Eastcoast, so that she and Stephen could be together.

When Stephen earned his MBA degree in 1994, he returned to the Eastcoast marketing firm where he was hired as an internal entrepreneur. In this role, Stephen helped build several hundred-million-dollar businesses under the corporation's banner. Stephen says, "I liked marketing because it was analytical, like a scientific experiment. It was like, 'How could I apply everything I learned from biochemistry to marketing?'"

Stephen and Rita married in 1996 and later moved back to the Bay Area. Stephen's sister Stephanie recalls, Rita was embraced by their family...

When he married Rita, I was thrilled that he had found a partner he adored so completely and who loved him so much (and also pushed him to have fun). They continue to be a wonderful team with Steve being the big-idea and deeply focused person, while Rita is the more practical street-smart person. Steve is both a loving husband and a loving father.

[REDACTED]

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Between 1997 and 2000, Stephen co-founded Getsmart.com, an Internet company focused on helping people make smart financial decisions. The site was sold to Providian Financial after just two years and Stephen stayed to facilitate the transition. Stephen enjoyed being an entrepreneur. "I like creating new things out of my ideas and then passing it on to see my ideas grow into a real business," he says.

Stephen and Rita's two sons were born in San Francisco, Adam in March of 1998, and Jordan just 14 months later in May 1999. The family moved to Los Angeles a year later after Stephen was recruited to run a division of Korn Ferry, which was the largest executive recruiting firm in the world. For more than two years, Stephen was the CEO of the firm's middle market business, Futurestep, a recruiting and staffing business. Korn Ferry Futurestep was a global business that was losing money when Stephen stepped in. With 400 employees under him, he turned the business around and restored its profitability.

Over the next 20 years, Stephen worked as an entrepreneur and senior executive for an array of startups and middle-management companies, often in the IT space. His focus was on helping companies improve at board, advisory and operational levels. Stephen has consistently earned a reputation as a thoughtful, supportive businessman who has encouraged his employees, co-workers

and employers to maintain a team approach for the benefit of the employees, the company and its clients.

At Korn Ferry in 2000, Stephen met James Celentano, who has continued to work with him. Mr. Celentano states that he considers Stephen to be a boss, mentor, friend and client...

Stephen's style and values were a refreshing departure from that overheated late 90s approach to business. As Stephen coached me . . . it became evident that he cared about the people on my team, and wanted to make informed fact-based decisions about assigning people to responsibilities that they were more likely to excel at, identifying training needs for the team, and taking steps to ensure we put the needed resources toward following through on obligations to clients. I cannot say this about other supervisors I had at Korn Ferry, and I was quite conscious at the time that Stephen would have had to take some risks personally and politically to lead so responsibly in that company in that era.

As part of his approach, Stephen joins the management of a company with an eye toward increasing its value. Then he moves on to the next struggling enterprise.

After leaving Korn Ferry, Stephen was hired by Matthew Coffin of Coffin Capital & Ventures as a strategy consultant for LowerMyBills.com, a company offering mortgage-debt relief since 1999. After building a new business model for the company, Stephen took over as general manager until 2007, and then became president and CEO for the next two years. In 2005, the financial services business Experian bought LowerMyBills, and Stephen became general manager of the parent company's interactive media and various other digital assets. Mr. Coffin, who has known Stephen for 17 years, emphasizes Stephen's strong leadership skills, as well as his unassuming nature...

Due to his outstanding teamwork and contributions, I asked Stephen to join full-time, and he eventually became our Chief Operating Officer, due to the trust and strong leadership skills that he had shown. Additionally, post the sale of that company, I recruited Stephen to join a video gaming company that I was a board member of, which I would only have done knowing that he is a reliable, high character person—again Stephen eventually became COO and did a terrific job in a tough situation... In 100 percent of the cases, Stephen has always shown himself to be of high character, smart and trustworthy.

Mr. Coffin elaborates on Stephen's humility. . .

One thing that I thought was a great sign of his experience and good character, was that despite him being the #2 person at the company, he did not feel that he should be paid the second highest amount. He thought that the higher amount should go to another person who was in the sales role, who potentially could impact the company more.

During Stephen's time at LowerMyBills, Robert Gabel, who reported to him, said he needed to leave the company in 2003. Mr. Gabel recalls...

Stephen asked why I was quitting and when I explained my wife and I decided we both couldn't work full time, he asked if I could work part time for the company, which I did... I was also able to drop and pick my kids up from pre-school and be around if my wife was traveling. Stephen found a clear win/win for both the company and me.

David Razavi was recruited by Stephen to be the head engineer at LowerMyBills. Reflecting on his experience working under Stephen for four years, Mr. Razavi states...

I got to know Stephen personally and admire his intellect, integrity and genuine care for his employees. There were many occasions where I, or my colleagues needed his help and advice, and he made himself available to help others. He has been a mentor to me. ... He provided training and professional coaching for all employees. Stephen cares deeply for employees and created an atmosphere of "open-honest" communication. Everyone in the company attended these trainings regardless of the rank. Stephen provided many team-building exercises, training programs and professional coaching to improve employee's skills, communications and interactions.

More recently, Stephen was the president and general manager at Machinima, an online entertainment network that provides YouTube clips and teasers for video games. Michael Hillson, who worked for Stephen for four years at Machinima, states that Stephen had a profound effect on his life...

Working for, and with, Stephen was undoubtedly the most fulfilling professional experience of my career. The responsibilities he delegated to me throughout the years conveyed to me a considerable amount of trust he had in my skill set. He always encouraged me to participate in additional learning to grow as an employee and, ultimately, as a manager of others. His departure from Machinima left a void that was never truly supplanted, as his vision for our company was unique and irreplaceable. I reflect with fond memories and feel incredibly fortunate our career trajectories aligned for this sustained duration in the workplace.

Mr. Hillson adds . . .

I gained more experience and knowledge from Stephen as a supervisor and company executive than any other professional relationship I have had in 20-plus years working for various employers. The value he showed towards hard work and perseverance was only exceeded by his dedication to family, a trait displayed to me consistently across the 4 years we spent together.

Another Machinima employee, Daniel Murray, voiced his respect for Stephen's character, and his attitude towards other employees . . .

At work, Stephen was always a "straight shooter" who operated with honesty and integrity... He was always as transparent as he could possibly be, with me and with others in the office... Despite the very stressful time, Stephen treated all Machinima employees, regardless of position, with

respect and courtesy.

James Burns, a sales manager for Machinima, reported to Stephen directly in 2017 when a serious health crisis prevented Mr. Burns from working for two months. He describes Stephen as very understanding and supportive...

When I returned, he ensured that my transition back to work was stress-free, with all the needed time to ease back into my routine. He was very cognizant of the seriousness of my condition and was kind and protective in how he facilitated my return to my duties.

Scott McDonald worked under Stephen for four years at Machinima. He notes Stephen's genuine interest in helping him on a project, even though Stephen was on the verge of leaving the company...

[Stephen] didn't have much in terms of official responsibilities and could have coasted through the last couple of weeks. But he knew I was working on an important long-term project that would shape the future of our department and company. He not only didn't check out, he doubled down on making sure I was set up for success ... He may have been leaving, but he wanted to make sure the people he was leaving were still progressing towards their goals.

Numerous employees and co-workers have stressed their appreciation for Stephen's mentorship. For example, James Celentano who had worked with Stephen at Korn Ferry, describes the important role Stephen later played in helping him. Mr. Celentano recalls that, after starting his own firm, he started to have health and business problems. Stephen reached out to James and introduced him to the CEO of Autoland who hired James' firm ...

[I]t was not the introduction, as much as the encouragement that Stephen gave to me. Stephen looked past the difficult time I was having then, believed in my capability, and took a chance by endorsing me to his CEO. The projects I did with Autoland served as a turning point for my firm, but also as a much-needed morale booster for me personally.

Mr. Celentano continues...

Knowing how much [Stephen's] mentoring has helped me, how he has encouraged and supported me in my professional development, I can assure you he has a great deal to offer. . . He cares about young people, and about giving them opportunities to learn and thrive.

T. Sean McCarthy has known Stephen since 1997, when Stephen was president and COO of GetSmart.com. Mr. McCarthy reported to Stephen for two years. He remembers an instance, among many, in which Stephen showed great consideration for an employee at the company...

I recall one of the company administrative assistants having a desire to be part of the sales team. This was a big step up but she had proven herself in her role and Stephen gave her a shot at sales. He mentored her and encouraged others to help her be successful. By the end of the next year, she was the company's top salesperson.

Many years later, Mr. McCarthy and Stephen formed a partnership as consultants in the technology world. Even then, Mr. McCarthy saw that Stephen maintained an engaged and supportive role in the lives of the people he has mentored...

It always impressed me that Stephen continued to stay in touch with and mentor many of the individuals he had worked with in the past. He did this on his own because he had a sincere interest in helping these young people be successful and get ahead in their careers. It was quite unusual for a person in Stephen's position to take the time to mentor these individuals with no real benefit to him.

Having known Stephen for the last 15 years, Amy Blakeslee reflected on Stephen's leadership when she worked under him at LowerMyBills...

In my 25-year career, I have worked at both Fortune 500 companies and startups. Stephen rates as one of the top three leaders I worked for, having always been supportive and provided professional guidance that most corporate leaders just don't take the time to do. ... He took the time to mentor me through complex topics of strategy, organizational politics and vendor/contract negotiations. I grew as a leader with his direction and I still use much of what I learned from him as I lead my organizations today.

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Concerns About Jordan and Adam

Although Stephen was born Catholic, he didn't practice until he met Rita. Because Rita believed strongly in raising her sons in the family religion, they regularly attended church every Sunday. Their sons, Adam and Jordan—now in their early 20s—were baptized, received their first communion, were confirmed in the church, and served as altar boys. Stephen felt it was important that the Church provide an anchor for them...

Rita brought religion back into my life. I didn't grow up with that, but I liked it. I like what religion gives, and I feel the message, the moral aspect of it.

Adam and Jordan were born an hour south of San Francisco, in Half Moon Bay, where Rita was raised. The family lived there just before moving to Los Angeles. The Semprevivos have always been a tight-knit family. As a rule, the family eats breakfast and dinner collectively, as early or as late as necessary to gather together.

Jordan and Adam attended public school at Warner Elementary through the 3rd and 4th grades. Stephen describes both boys as good students and played sports. Stephen coached their basketball, soccer and baseball teams. Adam was usually the best player, Stephen says, noting his son's size and coordination. Because he took athletics seriously, Adam didn't abuse his body. He avoids drugs, alcohol and even dairy products.

Both Adam and Jordan then attended the Buckley School, a private institution in Los Angeles. In his time at Buckley, Adam made a number of friends, took part in student government and his grades, earned him a place on the honor roll. In his last year, Adam's basketball team won the CIF championship and was named the best team in the conference. His future felt full of promise. He decided to transfer to a school with an even better basketball team, to challenge himself, and was accepted at two reputable private schools, Windward School and Campbell Hall. He chose the latter.

His brother stayed at the Buckley School. Jordan shared Adam's interest in sports and academics—he, too, was a good student—and he credits his father for stimulating many of the passions in his life...

Whether it was being an answer key to the persistent questions of my insatiable curiosity or his creative mind that taught me how to paint and help me discover my passion for the arts, my dad has always been there to foster the best parts of me.

Things seemed to be going well for Jordan until late in his sophomore year at the Buckley School he began suffering from inflammation, limited range of motion and intense pain in various parts of his body. It was debilitating and demoralizing to the teenager. Stephen took time off work so he and Jordan could fly to the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota in search of a solution. Jordan, it turned out, was suffering from Complex Regional Pain syndrome. But amid the uncertainty and pain, the teenager had an epiphany...

Every time I felt lost, or thought I had done every single test or therapy imaginable, my dad was there for me. Not only did he provide the moral support necessary for me to always see a light at the end of the tunnel, he was constantly doing research trying to find the next best treatment or different angle to provide a solution for this condition of mine.

Jordan continues...

Although that week was one of the toughest of my life, it was in that time that the clearest image of my dad was truly revealed to me. I saw a man who was concerned more about those around him than for himself. I saw a man who was able to pull me from my darkest depths even when I believed such pits were bottomless. I saw a man who got me through one of the toughest times in my life. I saw my dad.

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Stephen, after all, had found a successful adjustment out of childhood and adolescent turmoil by compartmentalizing his difficulties and throwing himself into a constructive distraction, his studies, which led to Harvard and all of the successes that came after that. In his own back-story, Stephen saw a model to help his son. If he got into a good school, Stephen's smart and capable older son would get over his self-doubts, gain a boost in confidence and thrive. Stephen concluded that a clear college path might give his son that boost, as well as something to look forward to. The momentary stresses, it became clear, were for a higher goal.

By that time, Stephen had already set up college funds for all of his ten nieces and nephews, as well as his own children. "As Stephen began to do better financially," Philip Jr., reports, "he set up accounts for all his nieces and nephews, to ensure they would be able to attend college."

The Semprevivos had already heard from other parents that they were using private counselors and tutors to help guide their children through the college prep process. Mark and Renee Paul family spoke in very positive terms about a man who had been very helpful to their children—as well as many other students at Adam's school—in the college application process. This man was, they insisted, a top-notch guide to the complex admissions process, which had grown many degrees more complicated in the years since Stephen attended Harvard. Stephen thought he might have found a way to help his son overcome his internal struggles.

That is where Rick Singer came in.

The Role of Rick Singer and the Roots of a Fraud

After an impressive and law-abiding career in which he diplomatically, but firmly turned around troubled businesses, it is reasonable to ask how a man like Stephen Semprevivo took part in a fraud or

any illegal act. After all, as numerous colleagues and employees suggest, he managed to retain a solid moral and human compass in professional spaces where people in similar roles often lost their way.

Stephen did not set out to commit a crime. Over a period of years, he was gradually, and deftly, manipulated into acquiescing to a role by a man he never expected to lead him there. Long before meeting Stephen, Rick Singer had orchestrated a large-scale scheme across a slew of top-tier universities that involved educators and coaches. The man was adept at finding blind spots in successful people where others saw strengths. Stephen was, in many ways, an ideal mark for Singer.

Harvard had played such a key role early in Stephen's career that he understood, perhaps better than most people, how seminal the choice of a university can be. In measuring Singer, Stephen's professional instincts were to look for good references, and the man had those, from the Paul family, who were close family friends. Singer also bragged about a track record of success that communicated credibility, while his work with numerous students at Adam's school provided an air of familiarity. Moreover, he had a corporate stamp of approval given that much of his business came from financial management firms such as Morgan Stanley, Oppenheimer and UBS; all of which offered Singer's services as a benefit for wealthy clients which made him appear to be legitimate.

To Stephen, Singer came across as extremely knowledgeable and professional about the college preparatory system. The man seemed to be several steps ahead in thinking through every element of the application process, from portraying students in a brand-like fashion, to portraying the whole student to prospective universities as part of a fleshed-out narrative.

But at that first meeting between Singer and Stephen, Rita and Adam, Stephen recalls...

He talked about his 10-year history of success and said he worked with a lot of the families in the area, helping their kids navigate the college process, building their resume and positioning themselves. ... He sounded very convincing. Even if he bragged and dropped names a lot, he seemed to know his business very well, and seemed professional at first.

Singer's company, The Key Worldwide Foundation, offered to help review Adam's college applications and take the administrative work off of the family's hands. The fee was \$7,000 a year for Singer and his team's services. He had tutors to review essays and lots of information on the application process.

And even in hindsight, it is clear that Singer had a legit business despite the many illegitimate things he engaged in on the periphery. Other than Singer's propensity to name-drop, over-compliment and bluster, he initially seemed too good to be true.

Adam was 15 years old when Stephen decided to move forward. The process began with one of Singer's tutors coming to the house every two to three weeks between 2014 and 2016 to meet with Adam.

At first, Stephen believed that Adam just needed some guidance to keep his academic future in hand. For the first year, things proceeded smoothly. Singer or another tutor would show up, usually on Sundays when Rita was working, and Adam seemed to appreciate the support. Stephen says...

Singer and his staff completely took over the administrative pieces of the process. They recommended academic and SAT tutors, helped us plan

several college trips to a number of east coast colleges, and helped with referrals for summer jobs for Adam.

Singer was packaging Adam as a scholar and athlete. Singer and his staff also helped with SAT tutoring. He talked to Adam about strategy and how to think about it when going through the study book. The first time Adam took the SAT's, he scored 1820 out of 2400, which was in the 83rd percentile, but Adam was disappointed. In his senior year, he raised his score to 1980, the 92nd percentile.

Stephen was pleased, and impressed by Singer, when he helped Adam get two summer jobs. The first was with Representative Karen Bass, a member of Congress from California, after Adam expressed an interest in politics. Singer got Adam a job doing data entry in Bass' office. The following summer, Singer arranged for Adam to work for Marjorie Decker, a Massachusetts state representative in Boston. Adam enjoyed both jobs and did well there.

On many levels, things seemed to be fine. Adam was working hard with the tutor and seemed to be doing well. Singer and Adam engaged in long discussions in which he offered guidance and when Stephen asked Adam how he felt about it all, the boy said Singer was helpful. His grades remained rock solid. Singer was very complimentary of the boy's progress. And Stephen didn't forget the help with the summer jobs. "It seemed that everything was going well," he says, "and I didn't want to interfere."

Singer eventually started being more critical of Adam in his conversations with Stephen, saying the boy needed more help. It was a shock to Stephen, who thought his son was doing great. Stephen started to doubt his view of his son. Singer gradually became so forceful with his barbed critical comments about Adam that Stephen didn't know how to respond—
[REDACTED]

Stephen, who was wrestling with his own professional duties, had come to believe that Singer knew what was best for Adam, but he also recognized that he was leaning too heavily on this man he had hired.

In his interview with Dr. Romanoff, Stephen recounts...

I was feeling like I was getting more reliant on Rick, and that 'I'm not seeing something that he's seeing,' explaining that this thought process was facilitated by his belief that Mr. Singer was so much more experienced in this area than he was, leading [Stephen] to take him at his word, that he has this view of all these kids, and that he's seeing where Adam sits.

Because of Singer's apparent expertise and his increasingly blustery approach, Stephen came to believe he had no choice but to follow the man's advice.

As he increasingly acquiesced to Singer, Stephen discovered that the college prep adviser ran hot and cold. Early on, Singer played the charmer. He spoke of his influential clients and connections. He knew how the donations process at Harvard worked. He flattered the Semprevivos about their donations and smart business and real estate investments. It was only much later that Stephen realized that Singer was actually casing out the Semprevivo family's financial situation for the time when the charmer would change.

People like Singer who display antisocial personality traits often try to seduce and ingratiate themselves with the people around them for their own gain. Many—like Singer—can be charismatic and at least superficially charming. They tend to embellish the truth as it suits them, and they lie easily to get what they want, or to get themselves out of trouble.

The greatest danger is often when they turn. They verbally cut people down with a cruel disregard for feelings, using their sharpened instinct for what hurts their victims most. They often accumulate knowledge early on during “good” periods to know how to most effectively harm their targets with an eye toward exploiting the situation most effectively later on. Some such people become threatening, or even openly violent, as needed to achieve their ends. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

With the dynamic between them set, Singer became more manipulative, purposeful and focused in his exploitation of the situation.

When Psychologist Richard Romanoff confronted Stephen about how he is capable of determining the viability of a business, but allowed Singer to exploit him and his son, Stephen told Dr. Romanoff that he never considered assessing individuals’ personalities to be critical to his work. Stephen’s professional interventions were based on a strategic analysis of the needs and goals of the company, and the various strategies the company could use to achieve specific goals. They were never based on a particular individual’s ability or lack of ability to execute a plan.

Their interchange highlights something that Singer was able to exploit.

Singer used an array of cynical tactics to get Stephen to trust the admissions “expert” over his own son. When Stephen had doubts, Singer made it seem like the beloved father would be abandoning his son’s future if he reversed course on the plan to help Adam, Dr. Romanoff points out.

It was around the beginning of 2015 that Singer pivoted, appearing to sour on Adam in his discussions with Stephen. While Stephen didn’t notice any discernible change in Adam’s knowledge, skills or effort, Singer suddenly went from being positive about Adam’s prospects to being much more critical and negative. Singer took to saying that all of the universities in Adam’s scopes were “a stretch.” Singer successfully convinced Stephen to question his son’s aptitudes...

I had been thinking that Adam was doing well, but after Rick became very negative, I grew concerned. I started to doubt Adam. Once Rick started categorizing many of the colleges as stretches for Adam, we started looking at other schools.

It was especially difficult for Stephen to witness the toll that the pressure from Singer was having on Adam. The very process that was supposed to help resolve Adam’s anxiety [REDACTED] was making it worse. As Stephen recalls...

Adam tried working even harder, but it was affecting his self-esteem. Adam was a lot less confident, and he seemed down.

For about six months, Singer kept insisting that Adam needed to work harder and harder, but no amount of effort seemed to affect the expert’s assessment. Singer also began telling Stephen that Adam needed to improve his SAT scores even more. Stephen states...

I was concerned and felt bad since Adam had been putting a good amount of time and effort into studying. Unfortunately, I was falling for Singer's method. Instead of doubting Singer, I doubted Adam. For this, I am ashamed.

As time passed and Adam came closer to the process of applying to schools, Singer increased the pressure. Although Adam got into the University of Indiana early, it was a safety school and Singer had pushed Adam to choose Georgetown. Stephen explains...

The family had gone on a trip to visit colleges, and Adam really liked Vanderbilt. Georgetown was his second choice. Singer, however, pushed for Georgetown until Adam changed his mind. He made it seem like picking Georgetown was the only way Adam would get into a school of his choice.

According to Stephen, once Singer had convinced Adam to apply to Georgetown, he discouraged Adam from applying to any other schools...

Singer was controlling the whole process. Before Mr. Singer, I thought Adam wouldn't have trouble getting into a good college. He was a good student. I thought he had good enough scores to get into a good college—schools like USC, Georgetown or maybe even Cornell.

Stephen says that he and Rita regularly told Adam he would be successful no matter where he went and that, "It's what you do and how you do it that counts," even if the Harvard-educated father acknowledged, "pushing hard for the best possible school on the list." He says that in providing this sort of focused encouragement, he was mimicking what his own mother had done for him.

It wasn't until the summer of 2015, after working with Adam for a year and a half, that Singer brought up to Stephen that he had helped many families get an extra push through making donations to athletic programs at colleges. He described it as a "booster" program where the athletic teams would use the donations to hire assistant coaches to fill budget gaps. Stephen, who had donated to Harvard, didn't think too much of it at the time...

I know people who've donated a lot of money to the schools their kids go to, but I didn't know anything about how that kind of thing happens. I knew other kids at Harvard whose parents were able to get them a preference. The universities encouraged it, but it didn't guarantee they would get in.

Singer urged Stephen to act quickly, stating that his client would need to donate money to Singer's Key Worldwide charity rather than the university. Stephen recalls...

He said there were no issues in doing it this way since the charity was a legitimate charity. My impression was that the charity would make donations to the school, and the school's sports program would give Adam an extra push. I still believed that Adam needed to go through the process and get accepted.

In Stephen's next meeting with him, Singer was more explicit. He was very negative about Adam's SAT scores and grades. He insisted that Adam needed a lot of help. At this meeting, Singer told

Stephen that he needed \$400,000 for his charity to donate to the college. Stephen realized that this was all part of Singer's larger plan. "That was a new piece, each time [they met] he was adding a new piece, first it was the booster factor, then the charity," Stephen says.

[REDACTED]

Everything Rick did was calculated, and he was very defensive. You couldn't question him. He had an air about him that just demanded that you trust him. I didn't feel comfortable, but I didn't talk to anyone about it either.

At this juncture, Stephen still thought he was making a legitimate donation. Singer had assured him that his charity was recognized as tax exempt, and that the donation was calculated to compensate for financial constraints in the athletic programs' budgets.

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It wasn't until August 2015 that Stephen came to understand that the plan Singer was setting up for the previous 18 months was unethical. Singer wrote a letter to the tennis coach at Georgetown in Adam's voice. In addition to reporting that Adam was doing well in his studies, the letter falsely stated that Adam had been practicing tennis over the summer.

What Stephen didn't know was that Singer had a long history of working with the tennis coach at Georgetown to get students admitted and that, since 2008, the coach received \$2.7 million from parents using Singer to get their kids into the school. (Singer directly recruited parents, in some cases, on the corporate speaker circuit where he would refer to a "side-door" program through which he claimed to have placed 800 students.)

Stephen realized that his earlier instinct that Singer had too much control over Adam's college application process had been right, and yet he hadn't acted on it until getting clear confirmation. Thinking he could reclaim control over the process, Stephen called Singer, but the conversation didn't go as expected. In Stephen's recounting, Singer finally laid out his cards...

When I brought it up to Mr. Singer, he told me, "The train has left the station." I felt I was in a situation that I couldn't back out of. It made me very uneasy.

Dr. Romanoff says Stephen came to feel more and more like Mr. Singer was “bullying” him, repeatedly asking him if he was “fully committed,” and saying things such as, “It won’t go well if we don’t follow through.” Stephen relates...

We were going down a very different road than the one I thought we were on. Rick became much more aggressive and negative. More than anything, I didn’t want to let Adam down. Rick said: It’s the only shot Adam had.

Rather than Stephen seizing control of his son’s destiny, it was Rick who discarded any pretense that he wasn’t in full control over Adam’s application. At the time, Stephen thought that everything was truthful in Adam’s application other than the embellishment about playing tennis that summer, but it turned out that Singer had falsely added information stating that Adam had won awards for tennis and played on the varsity tennis team. (Adam did play tennis, but only recreationally.) Singer also wrote an essay about tennis in Adam’s name, and attached it to his application.

Stephen also found Singer to be furtive, stress inducing and prone to rushing others to get his way. “That was the way Rick operated. He was adamant that everything be done yesterday.” Stephen now sees that it was around mid-2015 that he should have ended his connection to the man...

Rick's personality had dramatically changed. My feelings of confusion revolved around Singer’s aggressiveness and his impressive reputation among the different colleges. I was also concerned for Adam’s mental health. I didn’t want to let him down. He had worked so hard and was becoming disheartened. I felt tremendous pressure about interfering with a process that Rick claimed couldn’t be stopped. I was concerned and afraid for Adam about what Rick might do if we didn’t go forward with his plan.

In the spring of 2016, after Adam had been accepted at Georgetown, Stephen received an invoice from Key World Foundation and wrote the check to Rick’s charity. He remembers that Singer had called him and was very aggressive. Singer demanded insistently that Stephen pay promptly so that Singer wouldn’t need “to chase Stephen down” for the donation.

[REDACTED]

Stephen simultaneously felt under threat and didn’t want Singer to nullify Adam’s acceptance. As Stephen told Dr. Romanoff, Singer’s aggressive push to takeover and get what he wanted had the effect of shaking up his client. Stephen says that he had little ability, at that point, to submit the applications on time without Singer’s active engagement. “I don’t really have any good reason for why I did it. I felt trapped, that I couldn’t back out, and I was afraid of what Rick would do if I did,” he says. “And I think I didn’t want to let [Adam] down.”

Dr. Romanoff reports on Stephen’s thoughts on why, in hindsight, he engaged in behavior that was so uncharacteristic of how he had behaved in so many previous work and family situations...

[Stephen] said, “Now I see my reasoning and judgment was impaired,” though at that point he continued to express a deep sense of confusion about why this was the case. Pressed by me at that point he said, “I think

Asked by Dr. Romanoff about [REDACTED] Stephen says...

He adds..

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dr. Romanoff has conducted more than 2,500 psychological evaluations in state and federal courts. After fully assessing Stephen, his immediate impression was that he was dealing with someone who has devoted his life to work and family. According to Dr. Romanoff, Stephen presented as very well adjusted prior to the offense. He would have said that his life could not have been better. Stephen had a close and respectful relationship with his wife, both of his sons were in good universities; and he had built what for Stephen appeared to be an ideal business.

[REDACTED]

Specifically, I will present evidence supporting a conclusion that behaviors exhibited by Mr. Singer pierced through Mr. Semprevivo's existing psychological defenses, in a manner that reactivated unresolved feelings of helplessness and fear from that earlier trauma, in a manner that seriously interfered with his ability to resist the pressures he came to experience in the presence of Mr. Singer.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

That may have been an irrational fear, but Stephen did disappoint Singer when, in seeking to reclaim his son's destiny, they applied to universities their admissions adviser had told them to forget about. Stephen did it because he thought they would succeed. At that point, Singer aggressively reclaimed control in a way that would strengthen his efforts to secure the large payment he ultimately sought. Stephen recalls...

Rick sent a note asking why we continued to apply to schools. He applied a lot of pressure to stop the process. I said that I wanted to complete all the applications that we had in process, but I felt intimidated. I was afraid of what Rick might do if I did not go along.

[REDACTED]

I worry and get anxious and afraid. One of the things I worry about is why my sons feel so much stress. Adam also shows signs of depression about all kinds of things. I'm afraid to find out what's really going on with them. It creates so much stress that I avoid it.

Dr. Romanoff wrote of a revelation that Stephen had during their conversation...

Reflecting during our session on the thoughts he had just shared, as if thinking out loud about this information in a new light, he then explained: "It's like there were different Ricks. There was helpful and pleasant Rick, and arrogant Rick, and finally towards the end, intimidating Rick."

Later, Stephen added, a different side of Singer came out once federal authorities were investigating him, "Victim Rick," who begged for the help of others.

Philip Jr. is surprised that Stephen got involved in all of this, especially since it was unnecessary. "The irony is that Adam has done well at Georgetown. The boy's worked really hard in school. Steve never needed to do this."

Stephen's younger brother says he is dumbfounded given that his brother's "standards are very high, he's genuinely ethical and he would never screw anyone over." He describes his brother as someone who "worked really hard, whatever it took to do it correctly, no shortcuts."

Regrets, Remorse & Acceptance of Responsibility

Looking back, Stephen's voice cracks and tears well up in his eyes as he explains how he got spun by Singer in a way that weakened his bond with his son...

I just lost confidence, I lost confidence in Adam, I let Singer make me feel that Adam couldn't do it. ... Now I see Adam would have been just fine, and I feel ashamed.

In his letter to the Court, Stephen expresses his remorse and accepts full responsibility...

I have brought dishonor to myself and a great deal of pain to the people I love and who count on me to be honest and trustworthy. My wrongdoing has been a tremendous burden on my family, friends and colleagues. As a parent who has also mentored young people in their careers, I have always been proud of helping them find their path toward success through hard work and perseverance. In business I have always talked about integrity first and how important that is. I have done my best to teach good ethics and to follow the right path. Now, I have let down the people I have worked with and those whom I have mentored; and I have profoundly disappointed myself.

It brings me great shame that I have now set a terrible example for college bound students and their parents across the nation.

Adam's grade point average at Georgetown was above 3.0 where he was majoring in psychology, but he also continued to struggle with anxiety [REDACTED] in his first year, causing him to start seeing another therapist. For a time, Georgetown considered rescinding Adam's acceptance altogether, but Adam has been permitted to keep the credits he earned, even if he will not continue his studies at Georgetown for his senior year. Stephen explains, "Most schools will not accept Adam at all and others would make him start over."

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The charges in this case will also have consequences for Stephen who describes it as a life-changing event. "I'm trying to be positive," he says, "but it's actually catastrophic in terms of what it means." The last company that Stephen worked for let him go, and the bad press will probably make it impossible to continue in the field he did so well in for two decades. He has sat on 16 Boards of Directors, but with a felony, that also won't be possible anymore. "I've accepted this as the path I have to take," he says.

Rita has stood by Stephen, stating that it has not changed her sense of who her husband is.

The people who really know Stephen do not feel any differently about him. He puts on a good front, but Stephen feels responsible for what he did to Adam. He is doing everything he can to repair it. My biggest concern for Stephen is to recover and not feel so sad.

Stephen's friends, coworkers and associates are acutely aware of Stephen's remorse and sense of accountability. Andrew Chambers is a retired Special FBI agent who has known the Semprevivos for more than 15 years. Agent Chambers served in the Bureau's Criminal Division for many years, but after the September 11, 2001 attacks, was transferred to Counter Terrorism. After three decades, he retired in 2014. Reacting to Stephen's involvement in the college admissions case, Agent Chambers states...

I am saddened by Stephen's arrest and conviction. I am also moved by how he has accepted his guilt. My belief is that his misguided action was to help his son achieve a greater education. He has not tried to rationalize what he did or make any excuses. Stephen has already suffered great shame and hurt to himself and his family, and I hope his acceptance of his guilt moves the court to be lenient. There is no panacea for Stephen. He will have to live with his conviction for the rest of his life.

John Bear was married to Stephen's deceased mother-in-law. He has known Stephen for more than a quarter-century. Mr. Bear comments . . .

I know that Stephen is truly sorry for this situation and realizes the pain and embarrassment his actions have caused. It was a terrible mistake, but it was just that, and I stand behind him with love & support ... I am sadly aware that Stephen is pleading guilty for his involvement in the college admissions case. He has expressed his sincere remorse to me and takes full responsibility for his mistake in judgment.

James Burns worked as a sales manager at Machinima under Stephen's leadership from 2015 until Stephen left the company in 2017. Mr. Burns states . . .

I was not surprised when Stephen told me straightforwardly and without explanation that he was guilty and that he was going to be accountable for his actions. I believe Stephen suffered a serious lapse in judgment and that he understands he made a huge mistake. To me, his actions were totally out of character ... In my time working with Stephen I never saw him do anything unethical, try to cheat someone, act unprofessionally to a man or a woman or be unfair to anyone in any manner.

James Celentano, who has known Stephen both professionally and personally for over 19 years, is well aware of Stephen's remorse . . .

[Stephen] shared how much he regretted his actions, the pain this situation has created, especially for his son, and what a profound learning experience this is for him. Knowing Stephen all these years it was not surprising that he is accepting responsibility, pleading guilty, and seeking to learn and give back to society as much as he can.

David Murray, who worked with Stephen at Machinima starting in June 2013 for 14 months, says that Stephen deeply regrets his involvement in a crime...

Stephen expressed deep remorse and shame. He was unequivocal in his acceptance of responsibility, his acknowledgement of his own fault, and his understanding of the damage that he has done to his family and to the community at large.

Mr. Murray continues...

What I know about Stephen suggests that what he did...while a huge mistake, is not reflective of his core character or his values.

Knowing Stephen for 34 years, David Cantrell has witnessed Stephen's heartfelt remorse...

[Stephen] has expressed to me his remorse for what he has done, and I sincerely believe he has accepted full responsibility for his actions. His remorse is underscored by the anguish that I see in his eyes, face, and mannerisms.

As for Stephen himself, he addressed his role and his remorse in a statement to the probation officer:

I wanted the future for my son that he had worked so hard for. This was the main factor in my bad judgment, but the responsibility is all mine for my vulnerability to this extortion scheme. I will regret this for the rest of my life.

Community Service

Stephen has a long history of volunteer work helping various causes and charities, and in mentoring people, both at his workplace and independently in charitable actions. In college, he participated in the Big Brother program his sophomore and junior years.

Former college roommate David Cantrell notes Stephen's caring nature...

I, along with our other roommates, always knew we could rely on [Stephen]. He was generous with his time in helping others with studies and participated in the Big Brother program.

Stephen explains...

I was a Big Brother to a 13-year-old boy who was being raised by his single mom in Boston. I knew even then how important it was for a boy his age to have an older male in his life he could trust. We would spend time at the Harvard campus at the gym, library or cafeteria. I would sometimes help him with his schoolwork but most often we would just hang out together.

As a young man, Stephen also interned during a summer at the Einstein Medical Center where he worked to advance liver research.

In the late 1990s when Stephen was living in Northern California, he responded to a flyer asking for volunteers to teach word processing through an adult education program in East Palo Alto.

Volunteering once a week over a two-year period, Stephen helped adults in the program learn word processing skills to train them for the workforce.

When his sons were growing up, Stephen regularly coached baseball, basketball and soccer at the local recreation center.

Flint Dille, an adjunct professor at the University of Southern California, has known Stephen and his family since 2003. Their sons were on the little league baseball team Stephen coached in 2008. Mr. Dille relates...

[Stephen] was great with the kids. I never once heard him raise his voice, show any temper or do anything but be a calm supportive coach.

Stephen and Rita taught their sons by example the importance of kindness and compassion for individuals less fortunate. From when Adam and Jordan were in grammar school through their high school years, the Semprevivos volunteered as a family at food banks or other worthwhile charities.

Volunteering through St. Martin of Tours Church community events, the Semprevivos prepare care packages and presents for underprivileged youth during the holidays each year. They also volunteered through Saint Vincent Meals on Wheels for the last four years, a charity that brings food to seniors who are homebound. A letter from Betsy Rosenfeld-Vargus, who runs a program for Meals on Wheels, thanks the Semprevivos for their ongoing support.

Stephen also raised funds for Kids 4 Hope, a nonprofit that provides help for children with cancer.

In 2006, Stephen helped Rita with the creation of a "Reading Buddies" program at Warner Avenue Elementary School that strengthened child literacy. The program paired 3rd through 5th grade students who read to 1st and 2nd graders. Stephen and Rita remained involved with Reading Buddies for five years. Although they are no longer active, the program is ongoing. In a letter written by Janet Hartley, a teacher at the school, she says...

Among other things, Stephen developed the written and marketing materials, the website and scheduling for the program which was implemented at both Warner Elementary and Fairburn Elementary.

When Adam was in high school, Stephen and Adam volunteered with the environmental organization "Tree People," joining a crew to plant trees and shrubs, remove invasive species and clear debris.

For three years during the Great Recession, Stephen ran a career management program for graduates in need of work, although it was also open to anyone who was interested. "Most events were hosted at UCLA through the Harvard alumni club," Stephen explains. "I got speakers and built a website with follow-up content." A letter from Stephanie Davis, a speaker at the program confirms Stephen's involvement.

One program that Stephen is particularly proud of is his son Jordan's involvement with The LA Art Project. This was a program Jordan created as a high school student with Stephen's help. For three years, Jordan would go to grammar schools that could not afford art programs and teach simple skills. Each session resulted in the children coming away with art, which they were proud of.

Currently, Stephen is working with Volunteers of America, Los Angeles (VOALA). It is the largest affiliate of its parent charity, Volunteers of America, which serves poor and needy populations around the country. Through VOALA, Stephen is helping to design an economic literacy program that will be an adjunct to VOALA's Upward Bound and At-Risk Youth programs. Stephen is bringing in volunteers for practical skills sessions in which participants are immersed in job searches, résumé building, budgeting, entrepreneurship and business basics. The young people who participate will also be given refreshers to broaden their understanding of debt, money and taxes.

Reaching out to more than 500 students in the VOALA Upward Bound program alone, a primary aim is to provide young people with high-level mentors such as Stephen who can guide them toward financial literacy and economic opportunity.

Bob Pratt, the President of VOALA, explains that, "Mr. Semprevivo will bring an enormous amount of value to us. It is hard to find someone like Stephen, from the private sector, who has his level of experience and is available to a nonprofit like ours." Mr. Pratt continues...

Mr. Semprevivo's work experience in running and working for financial services institutions as well as his experience in setting up and overseeing a job placement and recruiting firm makes him an expert in the area of economic literacy. Additionally, his experience and success as a business owner, entrepreneur and mentor makes him an ideal person to help us build out and grow our economic literacy program for young people. In this capacity, he will be working directly with our students and youth in several capacities.

Upward Bound's goal is to increase the chances that participants complete secondary education and enroll in, as well as graduate from higher education. The program also provides college- and career-planning workshops, a summer program, individualized academic planning and counseling, financial aid advice, scholarship and application assistance, supplemental Saturday instruction and weekly tutoring, as well as college and cultural field trips. Mr. Pratt spoke of the possibility of a larger role for Stephen with VOALA...

Mr. Semprevivo would be an incredible asset helping us with the development and implementation of our life skills program for both high school and at-risk youth ... His specific role would be a newly created position as program director for Economic Literacy. This role would specifically address youth in our Upward Bound and At-Risk Youth programs.

VOALA provides housing and support services to homeless young people, including LGBTQ, children who have been sexually exploited or trafficked, and runaways who have aged out of foster care, as well as others who have been incarcerated. The goal is to shift them away from a pathway to homelessness and incarceration, and onto "a path of self-sufficiency."

Stephen has already demonstrated his commitment with VOALA's efforts to help the homeless. Initially working with Los Angeles's homeless veteran population, Stephen is helping VOALA develop a start-up that will provide jobs and housing for the city's homeless and their families. The start-up is part of Volunteers of America's "Constructing Careers" initiative, which will offer job skills to veterans through the installation of factory-manufactured housing units in the yards of existing homes. Through this project, the organization aims to provide young veterans with high

wage skills while also providing housing to veterans and their families that are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Part of the goal is to help alleviate the grave housing crisis in Los Angeles.

The homeless crisis is driven by rents that have far outpaced incomes, severe housing shortages and more than 700,000 people on the verge of falling short on rent. The city's estimated affordable housing deficit is more than half-a-million units. There are at least 60,000 homeless people in Los Angeles this year, according to HUD data, with some estimates placing the number nearly twice that high. VOALA's goal is to employ 3,750 veterans to build 450 housing units over the next five years, with 1,875 of them securing high-wage jobs and careers. If the project thrives, Volunteers of America hopes to roll the program out nationwide. While the housing units are specifically set aside for veterans, the net effect is to increase the overall number of affordable units in the city.

To those ends, VOALA is preparing to purchase factory-built accessory dwelling units and placing them in backyards of single-family homes. This will provide construction jobs, training and job placement for young veterans, while the new units house vets and their families who might otherwise risk becoming homeless. VOALA President Bob Pratt highlights some primary obstacles...

The challenge for VOALA is that this innovative social enterprise is a business startup. Our dedicated staff is ill equipped to develop such a comprehensive endeavor without the expertise from others. We are fortunate to have had Stephen Semprevivo approach us at this time ... Stephen has developed a clear business plan and business model for the project that will allow us to build a self-sustaining enterprise to meet the needs of our at-risk youth and Veteran families.

Stephen's background as an entrepreneur has made it possible for VOALA to set out on this venture, Mr. Pratt explains...

As we are now in our execution stage, Mr. Semprevivo's background in implementing and building start-ups is critically important to our success. He has been enormously helpful in helping us take our first steps forward in constructing our training facility and developing our curriculum. Mr. Semprevivo is taking a very hands-on approach to the program. He will be working directly with our Transitional Adult Youth and Veteran populations, evaluating participants who can be successful in the program and then leading education and training sessions. Finally, he will be working with the population to understand the program's effectiveness and opportunities for improvement. As we continue to move forward, Mr. Semprevivo's background in working with private corporate funding sources is essential to our success, as we do not have that knowledge and experience in-house. This is especially the case because the ambition is to create scalability, enabling the project to be replicated nationally, with minor adjustments throughout the VOA service network.

The project has been made possible by changes in the law that make it easier for a homeowner to place a rental unit on their property. As envisioned, VOALA will train veterans to meet OSHA-10 standards and have the skills and tools necessary to build the dwellings used by Constructing Careers (manufactured accessory dwelling units). These workers will then build the homes using funds provided entirely by the homeowner. When the units are completed, they will belong to the property owner and be managed by VOALA. Homeless veterans and their families will be able to rent them using government-provided Section 8 housing funds.

Mr. Pratt credits Stephen with providing branding for the project that made it possible to effectively articulate their mission to constituent and government agencies. For example, Stephen's marketing work provided VOALA with an opportunity to make a critical presentation to the City of Los Angeles, as well as other constituents and government agencies in search of support. Mr. Pratt says...

The work Mr. Semprevivo has done here has been instrumental in focusing us on goals for the future and helping us hit key milestones in our pilot program ... [W]e were most recently presented to members of Los Angeles Mayor Garcetti's office, which resulted in broad exposure for our mission. Stephen has also leveraged these marketing materials and his expertise to create a series of direct mail pieces that we are using to bring awareness of our mission to local property owners who can participate in the program.

Stephen is also working to cultivate corporate funding sources for the project. Mr. Pratt emphasizes that Stephen has not only proved to be a committed volunteer, but also that his skills are very well matched to VOALA's needs...

Mr. Semprevivo is highly motivated. He has been working 20 hours per week since early April of this year. We have great momentum and opportunities with these programs and would like to continue to make progress.

In considering Stephen's sentence, Mr. Pratt adds, "I would ask that the Court consider the work he has already done for VOALA in our veterans program, and his commitment to helping establish our Economic Literacy and Constructing Careers program by allowing him to pay his debt to society through serving the disadvantaged community."

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Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Sheila Balkan

Sheila Balkan, PhD
Criminologist